

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2020-2036

Basic Conditions Statement (incorporating Area Statement)

South Woodham Ferrers

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN, 2020-2036

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

(incorporating Area Statement)



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Note: The typeface and colour palette used in this Neighbourhood Plan reflects the original masterplan documents for South Woodham Ferrers

1. Introduction

This document

- 1.1 This document is the Basic Conditions Statement that has been prepared to accompany the submission version of the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan. It demonstrates how the proposed Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance and conformity with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations (2015) (as amended) and how other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) have been considered to have been met.
- 1.2 The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are:
- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
 - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3 In addition to the primary legislation listed above, one further Basic Condition of relevance to Neighbourhood Plans is set out within the Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) 2012 (as amended). This is that¹:
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitat sites.
- 1.4 This Basic Conditions Statement, along with the Consultation Statement, support and provide evidence to the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan.

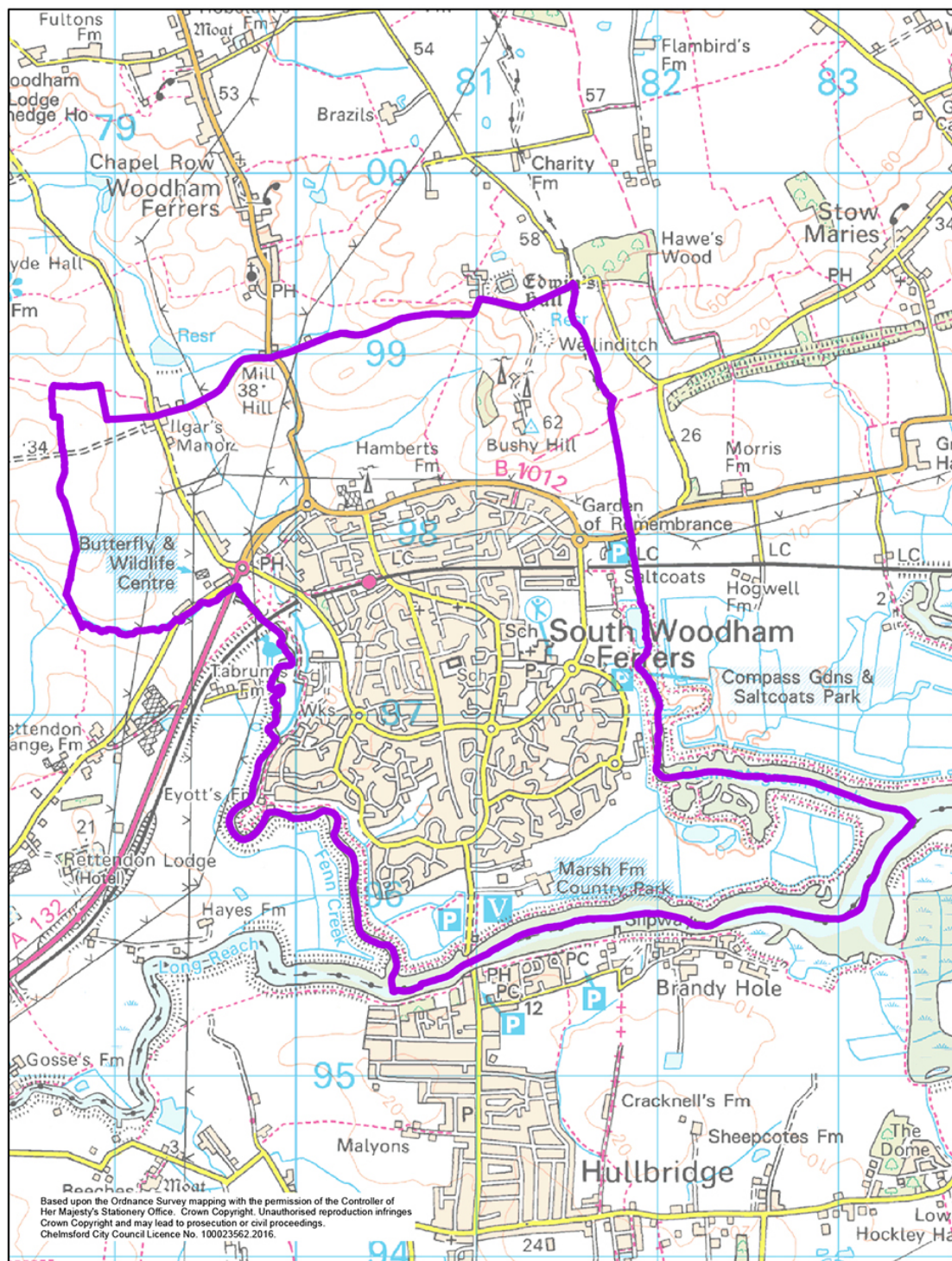
¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#EU-obligations-neighbourhood-planning> (accessed April 2020)

Other supporting documents and evidence

- 1.5 This Basic Conditions Statement supports the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan. Other documents prepared and submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan include:
- Character Area Study, March 2019
 - Consultation Statement, May 2020
 - Comparator Towns study, April 2019
 - Landscape Analysis, April 2019
 - Parking Occupancy and Car Park User Questionnaire Report, October 2019
 - Town Centre Analysis, February 2019
 - Town Centre Ideas, April 2019
 - Town-wide Analysis, February 2019
 - Town-wide ideas: Access and Movement, April 2019
 - Town-wide ideas: Green Infrastructure, April 2019
 - Town-wide ideas: Northern Growth Area, April 2019

Area statement

- 1.6 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted to Chelmsford City Council by South Woodham Ferrers Town Council. The Town Council is the qualifying body and is entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.7 The South Woodham Neighbourhood Area was designated by Chelmsford City Council (CCC) on 13th October 2015 (see Appendix 1 for the CCC designation decision document). The decision document states that the Neighbourhood Plan Area is "deemed logical in spatial terms, as it follows the parish boundary".
- 1.8 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out policies that relate to development and the use of land within the neighbourhood area, as shown in Figure 1.
- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. There are no other adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans which cover the designated neighbourhood area.
- 1.10 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2020-2036.



0 500 1,000 Metres
JANUARY 2016

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Figure 1: The designated Neighbourhood Plan area for South Woodham Ferrers

2. Conformity with National Planning Policy

Overview

- 2.1 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan is required to be prepared in accordance with national planning policy and guidance. National planning policy is established within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), with supporting guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 2.2 The NPPF (para.29) iterates that neighbourhood planning *"gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area"*.
- 2.3 The NPPF establishes the framework for developing local and neighbourhood plans. As the principles of the NPPF are based on *"a presumption in favour of sustainable development"* (Para. 13) it is stated that *"the application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning"*. Critically, the NPPF (para. 13) stipulates that *"neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies"*.
- 2.4 In line with the objectives of the NPPF, the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan provides positive planning guidance for the area. The policies have been informed by the guidance set out in the NPPF, with the following topics & paragraphs of the NPPF (as set out on the subsequent pages of this document) being the most relevant.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 2.5 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies that aim to deliver a sufficient supply of homes:

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 59-66 |
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF DC2: Built-up Area | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA 2: Housing | |

- 2.6 Policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) and SWF DC2 (Built Up Area) support the principle of delivering a sufficient supply of homes through stipulating that development proposals which include residential (C3 uses) are appropriate in the Town Centre's central spine and the built-up area of South Woodham Ferrers (provided that development proposals conform with the town centre design principles, set out in Policy SWF TC2).
- 2.7 Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) states that a mix of housing types will be provided within the Northern Growth Area, thus helping to deliver a sufficient number of homes within the Area.
- 2.8 It is considered that Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) satisfies paragraph 61 of the NPPF – which states that housing needed for different community groups should be reflected in planning policies, as Policy SWF NGA1 stipulates that provision of plots for Travelling Showpeople should be incorporated in development proposals for the Northern Growth Area.
- 2.9 In accordance with paragraph 61 of the NPPF, Policy SWF NGA2 (Housing) states that a range of housing sizes and types will be provided within the Northern Growth Area. Policy SWF NGA2 also addresses specific housing needs for different community groups, as consideration is given to multi-generational homes which allow older children and elderly family members to live independently.

Building a strong, competitive economy

- 2.10 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to build a strong and competitive economy:

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 80-82 |
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-Vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |

- 2.11 In accordance with paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which places significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, Policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles) and SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) state that: where opportunities arise, existing retail and business units (along the Central Spine) should be reconfigured to provide new windows and doors opening onto the Central Spine; new development should include active frontages at ground floor level; and, major development in the town centre should incorporate a mix of uses, including: retail, leisure and development, offices (including flexible offices), arts, culture, tourism, social and community uses and residential.
- 2.12 Policies SWF MA3 (Public Transport) and SWF MA4 (E-Vehicles and Mobility as a Service) encourage sustainable economic growth and local investment through encouraging e-vehicle charging and docking points and improved bus services between key areas such as: the Northern Growth Area, Chelmsford, Wickford, the town centre and the railway station. This will help to provide a sufficient service that is capable of meeting anticipated needs over the Plan period.
- 2.13 Part (m) of Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) helps to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt through encouraging flexible premises for small and medium enterprises and providing new employment floorspace within the Northern Growth Area.
- 2.14 Overall, it is considered that the above policies build on South Woodham Ferrer's strengths, whilst also identifying opportunities for investment and creating optimal conditions for businesses to invest, expand and adapt.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- 2.15 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to ensure the vitality of town centres:

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 85-90 |
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities | |
| Policy SWF TC5: Town Centre Streets and Spaces | |
| Policy SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA2: Housing | |
| Policy SWF NGA3: School Provision | |

- 2.16 In accordance with paragraph 85 of the NPPF, Policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities through taking a positive approach to managing development along the 'Central Spine' and stipulating that new development in South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre should complement the special character of the centre.
- 2.17 With reference to paragraph 85 (a) of the NPPF, Policies SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) and SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities) promote the long-term vitality and diversification of the Town Centre through stating that suitable uses for new development within the town centre includes: retail, leisure and entertainment, offices (including flexible office space), arts, culture and entertainment, social and community uses and residential uses; and encouraging development which provides new community facilities or which improve existing facilities.
- 2.18 In recognition of NPPF paragraph 85 a), which states that policies should ensure town centres reflect their distinctive characters, Policies SWF TC5 (Town Centre Streets and Spaces) and SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking) support proposals which reconfigure parking provision within the town centre and improve the arrival experience into the town centre, whilst also stating that proposals should improve the attractiveness of the public realm.
- 2.19 Policies SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles), SWF NGA2 (Housing) and SWF NGA3 (School Provision) address the growth and future management of the Northern Growth Area. These Policies align with paragraph 85 e) of the NPPF, which states that appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre should be allocated in places where viable town centre sites are not available. Part f) and h) of Policy SWF NGA1 seek to optimise the connectivity between the town centre and the Northern Growth Area through the provision of safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclist along Burnham Road, Woodham Road and the B1418, as well as incorporating a new central street through the site.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 2.20 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to promote healthy and safe communities:

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 91-95 |
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities | |
| Policy SWF TC5: Town Centre Streets and Spaces | |
| Policy SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking | |
| Policy SWF MA1: Active Travel | |
| Policy SWF MA2: Alleyways | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-Vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC4: Chetwood School | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA3: School Provision | |
| Policy SWF NCIL 01: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) | |

- 2.21 Paragraph 91a) of the NPPF states that policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe spaces which promote social interaction through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for pedestrian and cyclist connections, and active street frontages.
- 2.22 In accordance with the above, Policy SWF TC1 (The Central Spine) states that the provision of clear and direct routes through sites which strengthen links into the 'central spine' and surrounding streets should be explored. Similarly, Policy SWF TC2 states that development proposals should provide for clear, direct and well-overlooked pedestrian routes through and around the development site. Policy SWF TC5 (Town Centre Streets and Spaces) and SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking) reinforce Policies SWF TC1 and SWF TC2 by stating that all development proposals should enhance the attractiveness of the public realm or should make financial contributions to the delivery of public realm improvements, and proposals which improve walking and cycling connections within car parks will be supported.
- 2.23 Policies SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) and SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities) promote mixed use development through supporting a variety of uses in the town centre such as: retail, leisure and entertainment, offices, flexible offices, art, culture and

tourism, social and community uses and residential; and encouraging proposals which provide new community facilities.

- 2.24 Policies SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA3 (Public Transport) and SWF MA4 (E-Vehicles and Mobility as a Service) conform with paragraph 91c) and 92b) of the NPPF by supporting healthy lifestyles, encouraging walking and cycling and helping to deliver local strategies which improve health and wellbeing. Similarly, Policy SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) and SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) state that development in the Northern Growth Area will include accessible green space which help complete the 'green necklace' of connected routes, as per paragraph 91c) of the NPPF.
- 2.25 In accordance with paragraph 91b) of the NPPF, Policy SWF MA2 (Alleyways) states that new footpaths should be direct and overlooked, which, in turn, will help to ensure that pedestrian routes are legible and safe.
- 2.26 As per paragraph 92a) of the NPPF, Policies SWF DC4 (Chetwood School), SWF NGA3 (School Provision) and SWF NCIL 01 (Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL]) seek to provide social recreational and cultural facilities and services through: safeguarding the Chetwood School for future educational or community use, ensuring that a new primary school will be delivered in the Northern Growth Area; and stating that CIL monies will go towards community projects, such as community gardening projects.

Promoting sustainable transport

- 2.27 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to promote sustainable transport:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | NPPF ref. (paras.) 102-107 |
| Policy SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities | |
| Policy SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking | |
| Policy SWF MA1 Active Travel | |
| SWF Policy SWF MA2: Alleyways | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC3: Parking | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA3: School Provision | |
| Policy SWF NCIL 01: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) | |

- 2.28 Policies SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities, SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA2 (Alleyways), SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace), SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles), SWF NGA3 (School Provision) and SWF NCIL 1 (Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL]) conform with paragraph 104 d) of the NPPF through stipulating that: development proposals within the town centre should provide clear and direct pedestrian routes and access to high quality walking and cycling links; proposals should enable active travel (non-car modes of travel) through the delivery of new walking and cycle routes; proposals must establish direct footpaths which link to existing alleyways; pedestrian and cyclist-friendly connections and crossing points should be provided along Ferrers and Burnham Road; new attractive walking and cycling routes should be established within the Northern Growth area; and routes to all school facilities (within the new Northern Growth Area site) should be pedestrian and cycle friendly.
- 2.29 Policies SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking) and SWF DC3 (Parking) align with the NPPF's aims of ensuring that parking considerations contribute to making high-quality spaces (paragraph 102e and 105 of the NPPF) through supporting proposals which reconfigure parking provision and the layout of spaces and setting key principles for parking in new development, such as ensuring on-plot parking is set back from the main building line.
- 2.30 As per paragraph 102c) of the NPPF, Policy SWF MA3 effectively identifies and pursues opportunities for public transport, through stating that development should, where appropriate, include new and enhanced bus services.

- 2.31 Policy SWF MA4 states that major development proposals should explore new mobility solutions, such as e-vehicle charging and docking points. This aligns with the NPPF's aims of focusing on sustainable locations and offering a genuine choice of transport modes which can help to improve air quality, as set out in paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

Making effective use of land

- 2.32 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to make effective use of land.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 117-121 |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities | |
| Policy SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC1: Design | |
| Policy SWF DC2: Built-Up Area | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA2: Housing | |

- 2.33 Policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) and SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities) meet the NPPF's aims (paragraph 118a) of encouraging multiple benefits from urban and rural land (including through mixed used schemes) by: encouraging 'pop-up' uses as a short-term measure to diversify the existing uses at the former Natwest Bank; stating that development proposals should incorporate a mix of uses and supporting proposals which replace community facilities (as opposed to schemes which remove these facilities altogether).
- 2.34 In accordance of paragraph 117 of the NPPF, which states that policies should promote the effective use of land in meeting housing needs, Policies SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area) and SWF NGA2 (Housing) state that development should predominantly be allocated on land within the built-up area and, additionally, the Northern Growth Area will provide for a range of housing types and sizes in line with the most up-to-date available information on housing needs.
- 2.35 In recognition of the multiple functions that undeveloped land can perform, and opportunities to deliver net environmental gains (paragraph 118a and b of the NPPF), Policies SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace), and SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) state that development proposals should consider incorporating greenery within the street network, and development proposals within the Northern Growth Area should also incorporate existing streams and water features within the site into green spaces.

- 2.36 Policy SWF DC1 stipulates that proposals for buildings of up to four storeys in height will be considered appropriate. This aligns with paragraph 118e) of the NPPF, which states that policies should support opportunities to use the airspace above residential and commercial premises for new homes.
- 2.37 Policy SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking) conforms with paragraph 118d) of the NPPF, (which states that policies should support the development of under-utilised land and buildings) through supporting proposals which reconfigure parking provision and the layout of spaces subject to evidence of use.

Supporting high quality communications

- 2.38 The South Woodham Ferrers NDP does not include policies which relate to this NPPF aim, therefore decisions on this matter will need to refer to the Chelmsford City Local Plan.

Achieving well-designed places

- 2.39 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to achieve well-designed places:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC1: The Central Spine | NPPF ref. (paras.) 124-132 |
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | |
| Policy SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities | |
| Policy SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities | |
| Policy SWF TC5: Town Centre Streets and Spaces | |
| Policy SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking | |
| Policy SWF MA1: Active Travel | |
| Policy SWF MA2: Alleyways | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC1: Design | |
| Policy SWF DC2: Built-Up Area | |
| Policy SWF DC3: Parking | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |
| Policy SWF NGA2: Housing | |
| Policy SWF NGA3: School Provision | |

- 2.40 Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations. In line with this, Policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA2 (Alleyways), SWF MA3 (Public Transport), SWF DC1 (Design), SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area), SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) and SWF NGA3 (School Provision) set clear design expectations through stipulating that: all development in the town centre should help to deliver a well-defined central spine (which acts as the 'High Street') and should create consistent building lines with active frontages at ground floor level; new cycle routes should reflect best practice principles (such as those contained in the London Cycling Design Standards); new footpaths within development proposals should be short, direct and overlooked; proposals should incorporate sustainable transport measures where appropriate; prevailing building heights should reflect the prevailing character of the area; development proposals should predominantly be situated within the 'built-up area'; development within the Northern Growth Area should be focused on the flatter parts of the site and routes to all school facilities within the Northern Growth Area will be pedestrian and cycle friendly.

- 2.41 Policies SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities) and SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities) state that development proposals should incorporate a mix of uses, in addition to encouraging development which provides new community facilities, as per paragraph 127e) of the NPPF.
- 2.42 In accordance with paragraph 127d) of the NPPF, Policies SWF TC5 (Town Centre Streets and Spaces), SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking) and SWF DC3 (Parking) establish a strong sense of place using street and space arrangements by stating that all proposals which: conform with parking principles a,b,c and d (listed in SWF DC3 [Parking]); enhance the attractiveness of the public realm and reconfigure parking provision and parking spaces will be supported.
- 2.43 With reference to paragraph 127 c) of the NPPF, which states that policies should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change, Policies SWF NGA2 (Housing) and SWF MA4 (E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service) encourage new mobility solutions (such as Mobility as a Service) to be incorporated into schemes, in addition to the exploration of flexible, loose-fit housing types.
- 2.44 As per paragraph 127e) of the NPPF, Policy GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) seeks to optimise an appropriate amount of open and green space through ensuring that development in the Northern Growth Area includes accessible green space.

Protecting Green Belt land

- 2.45 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Area does not fall within the Green Belt.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 2.46 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | NPPF ref. (paras.) 148-154 |
| Policy SWF MA1: Active Travel | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC1: Design | |
| Policy SWF DC2: Built-Up Area | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |

- 2.47 Policies SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace), SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area) and SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) conform with paragraph 148 of the NPPF through supporting measures which improve resilience. In particular, the NDP states that: proposals within the town centre should align with SuDS drainage principles; the green necklace wrapping around South Woodham Ferrers shall be protected from future development; development in the Northern Growth Area should consider incorporating greenery, street tree planting, green spaces and sustainable urban drainage systems and should also incorporate existing streams and water features and multi-functional SuDs.
- 2.48 Policies SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA3 (Public Transport), SWF MA4 (E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service) and SWF DC1 (Design) support the NPPF's aims (paragraph 148) of supporting the transition to a low carbon future and contributing to reductions in greenhouse gases by stating that: proposals should enable active travel (non-car modes of travel) and should respond to the need to reduce air and noise pollution through incorporating sustainable transport measures; proposals for e-vehicle charging points and shared mobility infrastructure are welcome; and low carbon approaches to construction are also supported.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 2.49 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles | NPPF ref. (paras.) 170-173 |
| Policy SWF MA1: Active Travel | |
| Policy SWF MA3: Public Transport | |
| Policy SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service | |
| Policy SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace | |
| Policy SWF DC1: Design | |
| Policy SWF DC2: Built-Up Area | |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |

- 2.50 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Part e) of the NPPF paragraph 170 stipulates that policies should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. In alignment with the above, Policy SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles) states that development in the town centre should align with SuDs principles and explore options that [...] reduce pollution. Policies SWF MA1 (Active Travel) and SWF MA3 (Public Transport) state that proposals should enable active travel (non-car modes of travel) through delivery of new walking and cycling routes and should also respond to the need to reduce the generation of road traffic and help reduce air and noise pollution. Policy SWF MA4 (E-vehicles and Mobility as a Service) seeks to prevent new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of air pollution through supporting the provision of e-vehicle charging and docking points, and Policy SWF DC1 (Design) states that new development should contribute to the provision of well-designed energy efficient buildings and places.
- 2.51 Policies SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) and SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area) conform with paragraph 170 d) of the NPPF (namely minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity) through stipulating that: development in the Northern Growth Area shall include green accessible space; and that the green necklace wrapping around South Woodham Ferrers shall be preserved and protected from future development. Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) states that the Northern Growth Area proposal should provide for an accessible, central green space.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 2.52 The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Policy SWF DC1: Design | NPPF ref. (paras.) 184-188 |
| Policy SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles | |

- 2.53 Policies SWF DC1 and SWF NGA1 supports the NPPF's aims (paragraph 185) of ensuring plans set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through stating that development should respond to the positive design features identified within the South Woodham Ferrers Character Area Study; and proposals within the Northern Growth Area should incorporate existing streams and water features, as well as ensuring that SuDs should be multi-functional to deliver benefits for the built, natural and historic environment.

Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

- 2.54 The South Woodham Ferrers NDP does not include policies which relate to this NPPF aim, therefore decisions on this matter will need to refer to the Chelmsford City Local Plan and the Essex Waste and Minerals Local Plan, as referenced in Appendix C of the South Woodham Ferrers NDP.

3. Achieving Sustainable Development

- 3.1 The NPPF promotes sustainable development, stating that the 'purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'. Sustainable development is defined as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
- 3.2 The NPPF views sustainability as made up of three objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The objectives are:
- *Economic*: to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
 - *Social*: to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
 - *Environmental*: to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 3.3 The following tables (Tables 1-3) summarise how the objectives and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan contribute toward sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF. This demonstrates that the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals.

Delivering Economic Sustainability

- 3.4 The NPPF definition of economic sustainability is 'building a strong, responsive and competitive economy'. The table below shows how the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan responds to this.

| ECONOMIC | |
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| <i>NPPF definition: 'building a strong, responsive and competitive economy'</i> | |
| SWF NDP Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1: to revitalise the town centre such that it becomes the hub of civic life and activity, providing a range of uses and facilities that cater for day-to-day needs, entertainment and leisure for all ages • Objective 02: to make it safer and easy for all people of all ages to move around South Woodham Ferrers, promoting active and sustainable transport measures • Objective 05: to successfully integrate new growth and expansion with the existing built form and communities, providing housing choices and opportunities, as well as new community infrastructure, for the benefit for all |
| SWF NDP Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWF TC1: The Central Spine • SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles • SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities • SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities • SWF TC5: Town Centre Streets and Spaces • SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking • SWF MA1: Active Travel • SWF MA3: Public Transport • SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as Service • SWF DC2: Built-Up Area • SWF DC3: Parking • SWF DC4: Chetwood School • SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles • SWF NGA2: Housing |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWF NGA3: School Provision • SWF NCIL 01: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) |
| Commentary | <p>The South Woodham Ferrers NDP is founded upon the principle of 'complete communities', whereby the strong sense of community and identity that the town experiences will be strengthened. Central to this vision, is the need for flexible place-making. The NDP policies therefore funnel economic activity towards the 'Central Spine' and the 'Northern Growth Area', whilst also ensuring that infrastructure such as cycle paths and schools are delivered within these areas. Altogether, these policies help to coordinate infrastructure provision/delivery into the 'right places', thus creating optimal conditions for improved productivity and growth in South Woodham Ferrers.</p> <p>With this in mind, the South Woodham Ferrers NDP supports proposals for mixed use developments and safeguards and promotes the provision of community facilities, as explained within the Plan. This helps to guarantee that the town becomes a hub of civic activity, whilst also ensuring that sufficient land/uses are available in the right places and at the right time to support the level of growth earmarked for the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p> |

Table 1: The Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to economic sustainability

Delivering Social Sustainability

- 3.5 The NPPF definition of social sustainability is 'supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities'. The table below shows how the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan responds to this.

| SOCIAL | |
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| <i>NPPF definition: 'supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities'</i> | |
| SWF NDP Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1: to revitalise the town centre such that it becomes the hub of civic life and activity, providing a range of uses and facilities that cater for day-to-day needs, entertainment and leisure for all ages • Objective 02: to make it safer and easy for all people of all ages to move around South Woodham Ferrers, promoting active and sustainable transport measures • Objective 03: to integrate surrounding green space into the town and create new green space for the use and enjoyment of all, whilst also delivering environmental, health and well-being benefits • Objective 05: to successfully integrate new growth and expansion with the existing built form and communities, providing housing choices and opportunities, as well as new community infrastructure, for the benefit for all |
| SWF NDP Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWF TC1: The Central Spine • SWF TC2: Town Centre Design Principles • SWF TC3: Town Centre Uses and Activities • SWF TC4: Town Centre Community Facilities • SWF TC5: Town Centre Streets and Spaces • SWF MA1: Active Travel • SWF MA3: Public Transport • SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as Service • SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace • SWF DC2: Built-Up Area |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWF DC4: Chetwood School • SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles • SWF NGA2: Housing • SWF NGA3: School Provision • SWF NCIL 01: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) |
| Commentary | <p>As iterated above, 'complete communities' is a key founding principle of the South Woodham Ferrers. Central to this Vision, the NDP promotes a mixture of uses in the town centre and a shift towards active travel modes, e-vehicles and better public transport as means of providing more equitable transport opportunities and encouraging healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>In recognition of the NPPF's objective of providing a sufficient number and range of homes, Policy SWF NGA2 states that a range of housing types and sizes will be provided within the Northern Growth Area. In addition, a new primary school, central green space and new walking and cycling routes will be incorporated into the scheme, thus providing a well-designed built environment which is capable of meeting the needs of present and future generations.</p> <p>Furthermore, Policies SWF TC1-5 set design principles and guidance for the town centre. These policies encourage a mixture of uses, active frontages along the 'central spine', new or improved community facilities and an attractive public realm. Cumulatively, these policies will forge a strong and vibrant town centre which effectively supports the community's health, social and cultural well-being.</p> |

Table 2: The Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to social sustainability

Delivering Environmental Sustainability

- 3.6 The NPPF definition of environmental sustainability is to 'contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'. The table below shows how the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan responds to this.

| ENVIRONMENTAL | |
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| <i>NPPF definition: 'contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'</i> | |
| SWF NDP Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 02: to make it safer and easy for all people of all ages to move around South Woodham Ferrers, promoting active and sustainable transport measures Objective 03: to integrate surrounding green space into the town and create new green space for the use and enjoyment of all, whilst also delivering environmental, health and well-being benefits |
| SWF NDP Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWF TC1: The Central Spine SWF TC6: Town Centre Car Parking SWF MA1: Active Travel SWF MA3: Public Transport SWF MA4: E-vehicles and Mobility as Service SWF GS1: Completing the Green Necklace SWF DC1: Design SWF DC2: Built-Up Area SWF DC3: Parking SWF NGA1: Placemaking Principles SWF NCIL01: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) |
| Commentary | The above NDP policies seek to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural environment through stating that development in the Northern Growth Area will include accessible green space, and that the green necklace wrapping around South Woodham Ferrers (including land to the north of |

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| | <p>the Northern Growth Area) shall be preserved and protected from development.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment, Policy SWF DC1 states that new development should respond to the positive design features identified within the South Woodham Ferrers Character Area Study. In addition, Policies SWF TC1, SWF TC6 and SWF NGA1 provide a number of design principles which help make effective use of land and enhance the built environment within the town centre and Northern Growth Area.</p> <p>Policies SWF MA1, SWF MA2 and SWF MA4 encourage development proposals to enable active travel and to provide better transport and e-vehicle charging and docking points. This aligns with NPPF objectives through helping to minimize pollution and mitigating climate change risks through the shift towards a low carbon economy and sustainable transport modes.</p> |
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Table 3: The Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to environmental sustainability

4. General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

- 4.1 For Neighbourhood Plans to meet the Basic Conditions set out in the Neighbourhood Planning regulations they need to demonstrate general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan.
- 4.2 For South Woodham Ferrers, the development plan is the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan. This was adopted on 27th May 2020.
- 4.3 The NPPF (para. 17) states that a development plan should include strategic policies to “address each local planning authority’s priorities for the development and use of land in its area”. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF later iterates that non-strategic policies should be “used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development”. The NPPF (para.20) states that strategic policies should make sufficient provision for:
- Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure, and other commercial development;
 - Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 4.4 The contents page of the Chelmsford City Local Plan confirms the list of Strategic Policies set out in the Local Plan. They are:
- Strategic Policy S1: Spatial Principles.
 - Strategic Policy S2: Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk.
 - Strategic Policy S3: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.
 - Strategic Policy S4: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment.
 - Strategic Policy S5: Protecting and Enhancing Community Assets.
 - Strategic Policy S6: Housing and Employment Requirements.
 - Strategic Policy S7: The Spatial Strategy.

- Strategic Policy S8: Delivering Economic Growth.
- Strategic Policy S9: Infrastructure Requirements.
- Strategic Policy S10: Securing Infrastructure and Mitigation.
- Strategic Policy S11: The Role of the Countryside.
- Strategic Policy S12: Role of City, Town and Neighbourhood Centres.
- Strategic Policy S13: Monitoring and Review.

4.5 In addition, the allocation of the Northern Growth Area in South Woodham Ferrers is classified as a Strategic Growth Site. The associated policy addressing this is set out in the Local Plan at Strategic Growth Site Policy 10: North of South Woodham Ferrers.

4.6 This section of the Basic Conditions Statement demonstrates that the Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan aims to build on the policies contained within both the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan by providing neighbourhood level planning policy where it has been found appropriate. Table 4 below demonstrates how the policies of the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan conform with the strategic policies established in the Chelmsford City Local Plan.

| Local Plan Strategic Policy | SWF NDP Policy Response |
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| Strategic Policy S1: Spatial Principles | The NDP reflects the Local Plan which allocates growth to the north of the town (see Strategic Growth Site Policy 10) and seeks to strengthen the town centre, at policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities), SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities), SWF TC5 (Town Centre Streets and Spaces) and SWF TC6 (Town Centre Car Parking). The NDP reflects the strategic policy with respect to access and movement, promoting safe and attractive walking and cycling routes, and improved public transport provision, at policies SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA2 (Alleyways), SWF MA3 (Public Transport), SWF MA4 (E-Vehicles and Mobility as Service), SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) and SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles). Through design policies SWF TC1 (The Central Spine), SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF TC3 (Town Centre Uses and Activities), SWF TC4 (Town Centre Community Facilities), SWF TC5 (Town Centre Streets and Spaces) SWF DC1 (Design) and SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) and greening policies SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace), SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area) |

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| | and SWF NCIL01 (Community Infrastructure Levy), the NDP also seeks to respect and enhance the character of the built form and surrounding landscape, as well as integrating new green space into the urban fabric. |
| Strategic Policy S2: Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk | The NDP promotes provision of facilities for day-to-day needs within a comfortable walk or cycle of the home, alongside a network of attractive walking and cycling routes, minimising the need to travel by car and thus reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Equally, it recognises that some people will still travel by car, and that e-vehicles and other technological solutions should be promoted. The NDP promotes the greening of the town for biodiversity and habitat creation, but also as a means to help manage flood risk. Strong encouragement is also given to high standards of design and construction that contribute to climate change and mitigation, including the encouragement of Passivhaus standards and solar orientation. |
| Strategic Policy S3: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment | Although there are a limited number of heritage assets in South Woodham Ferrers the Neighbourhood Plan recognises the unique legacy of the Essex Design Guide in shaping the character of the town and reflects this in design policies (SWF TC2 [Town Centre Design Principles], SWF DC1 [Design] and SWF NGA1 [Placemaking Principles]) that seek to ensure that future development reflect the positive features of character. A character study has been prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, as has a landscape analysis. It is intended that these are referred to in applications for future development. |
| Strategic Policy S4: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment | The NDP promotes the greening of the town, including introduction of new green spaces in the town centre and within residential areas through the conversion of grey spaces to areas of greenery. It also encourages improved access to the network of surrounding green space and extension of this into the northern growth area. The Neighbourhood Plan also includes guidance on RAMS in line with the Local Plan to secure contributions from development, where appropriate, to deliver the measures outlined in RAMS. |
| Strategic Policy S5: | The NDP includes policies that seek to protect existing community facilities in the town centre and encourage reuse of buildings for similar uses where these have or may be |

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| Protecting and Enhancing Community Assets | vacated. The Plan also requires delivery of a new primary school as part of the northern growth area, which may be delivered on site or by way of extension of an existing school. The Plan also looks to the future and recognizes that although the Chetwood School closed due to falling pupil numbers it might, as a result of changing demographic cycles, be needed again at a future date, and as such, it should be retained for education or other community uses. The Plan also sets out a list of projects and aspirations which it would like to see delivered through contributions from the neighbourhood portion of CIL. |
| Strategic Policy S6: Housing and Employment Requirements | The NDP does not allocate sites for development but it does include policies that help shape the nature of the new Northern Growth Area as well as design policies associated with any future development that might take place in the town centre or elsewhere across the town, and where the merits of development will be judged on an individual basis. The NDP recognizes that growth will take place and puts in place a framework that seeks to ensure this is undertaken in such a way that responds to and enhances the qualities of South Woodham Ferrers. The Local Plan policy states a requirement for new convenience retail floorspace in South Woodham Ferrers. However, this has since been accounted for by the opening of the Sainsbury's store to the north of the town. |
| Strategic Policy S7: The Spatial Strategy | The Local Plan policy states that South Woodham Ferrers sits within tier 1 of the settlement hierarchy and is thus an appropriate location for growth. The NDP reflects this and puts in place design policies and placemaking principles that help shape the form of new development. The Local plan policy notes that masterplans for growth areas will be prepared and approved by the City Council. Through the process of preparing the NDP discussions have been held with the masterplan team for the Northern Growth Area such that the NDP and masterplan are aligned so far as is possible. Further information is set out in response to Strategic Growth Site Policy 10 below. |
| Strategic Policy S8: Delivering Economic Growth | The NDP supports economic growth through policies that seek to strengthen the quality and diversity of the town centre. The Local Plan also notes that the Northern Growth Area should include an element of employment uses. These |

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| | are reflected in the placemaking principles established in policy SWF NGA1 of the NDP. |
| Strategic Policy S9: Infrastructure Requirements | <p>The Local Plan specifies the need for new crossings on Burnham Road as well as capacity improvements along the A132. These will need to be delivered through the development of the Northern Growth Area. The Neighbourhood Plan includes placemaking principles that seek to make Burnham Road safer and easier to cross for all. The Local Plan also promotes new and improved walking and cycling routes between new development and existing areas of activity. This is a core feature of the NDP, as set out in policies SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles), SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA2 (Alleyways), SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace), SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles), SWF NGA3 (School Provision), and SWF NCIL 01 (Community Infrastructure Levy), which includes making the network of alleyways across the town safer and more attractive for all to use, at all times of the day.</p> <p>The Local Plan requires flood mitigation measures to be incorporated into new development. The NDP reflects this in policies for the Northern Growth Area, including the green central space running alongside the watercourses. The NDP also promotes the greening of the existing urban area, helping to respond to flood risk and surface water run-off.</p> <p>The NDP also promotes improved access to green space for leisure and recreation purposes, extension of the green infrastructure network for biodiversity purposes, and also includes policies with regard to the delivery of new community infrastructure within the northern growth area, including primary school places.</p> |
| Strategic Policy S10: Securing Infrastructure and Impact Mitigation | <p>The Local Plan sets out the process for securing infrastructure improvements and mitigations, through the use of financial contributions, on or off site provision, and or the provision of land. The NDP does not include a policy in this respect and thus defers to Local Plan policy. The NDP does though include a set of projects and aspirations which it is hoped that the neighbourhood portion of CIL can be directed towards.</p> |

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| <p>Strategic Policy S11: The Role of the Countryside</p> | <p>The NDP follows the Local Plan in respect of the Northern Growth Area. Beyond the extent of the development area the NDP includes an aspiration that open space falls within the remit of a Community Land Trust for long term management and maintenance, with proposals for development directed to previously used land within the settlement boundary. See policies SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) and SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area).</p> |
| <p>Strategic Policy S12: Role of City, Town and Neighbourhood Centres</p> | <p>The Local Plan seeks to strengthen the role of designated centres. South Woodham Ferrers is designated as a town centre. The NDP includes policies and projects that seek to enhance the town centre experience for all. It aims to capture the benefits of the growth area to draw people into the centre. Design, greening and land use policies are intended to work hand-in-hand with policies and projects related to access improvements to help draw people into the centre. Projects including branding exercises, are intended to raise the profile of the centre. The potential reconfiguration of public space and parking are important to the appearance of the centre and capturing the retail spend of visitors.</p> |
| <p>Strategic Policy S13: Monitoring and Review</p> | <p>The Strategic Policy with regard to ongoing review of the Local Plan is noted. Similarly, the NDP includes a commitment to ongoing review to ensure that its policies remain up-to-date and relevant.</p> |
| <p>Strategic Growth Site Policy 10: North of South Woodham Ferrers</p> | <p>The Local Plan has allocated land to the north of Burnham Road (B1012) and east and west of the B1418 for a high-quality comprehensively-planned extension to South Woodham Ferrers, In recognition of this strategic growth site within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, Chapter 8 of the NDP addresses the new growth and expansion of the Northern Growth Area. Chapter 8 includes policies SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles), SWF NGA2 (Housing) and SWF NGA3 (School Provision), which highlight a number of criteria for inclusion within the masterplan for the site, including: the provision of a central green space, the retainment of existing rights of way and the provision of safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists along Burnham Road, in addition to the provision of a range of housing types and sizes and a new primary school. All of the above</p> |

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| | conditions align with the considerations listed under Local Plan Strategic Growth Policy 10. |
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Table 4: Relevant strategic policies in the Chelmsford City Local Plan and conformity of the SWF NDP policies with these

5. EU Obligations

Strategic Environment Assessment / Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 5.1 Chelmsford City Council has, on behalf of South Woodham Ferrers, undertaken a screening opinion. Following consultation responses from the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, it was determined that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor Habitats Regulation Assessment of the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan is required.
- 5.2 The Screening was undertaken prior to the Regulation 14 consultation of the Neighbourhood Plan. During the Regulation 14 consultation Natural England responded to say that, following the Local Plan being found sound by the Planning Inspector, the findings of that should be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan and the HRA, particularly in respect of the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). In response Chelmsford City Council made some minor amendments to the screening and re-consulted on this. As before, this confirmed that neither SEA nor HRA is required. In addition, wording was provided in respect of RAMS for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3 A copy of the screening is included in Appendix B of this Basic Conditions Statement.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.4 As noted above, the Screening determination letter issued by Chelmsford City Council recommended that a SEA is not required for the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the City Council recommended that a 'light touch' Sustainability Appraisal (SA) be undertaken proportionate with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.5 The SA undertaken of the Chelmsford Local Plan has been used as the basis for this section of the Basic Conditions Statement. The Chelmsford Local Plan SA sets out fourteen objectives and associated 'scoring system'. The objectives are presented in Table 5 below, along with commentary on how the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan respond to these. This demonstrates that the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan performs well against each of these objectives and will thus help achieve sustainable development through its blend of policies that will deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.

Table 5: Neighbourhood Plan response to Chelmsford Local Plan SA Objectives

| | SA Objectives | Neighbourhood Plan response to SA Objectives (Resulting effect summarised in Italics) |
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| 01 | Biodiversity and Geodiversity: To conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and provide improvements to the green infrastructure network. | <p>Objective 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan is focused on improving access to green space and integrating new green space within the existing built-up area, as well as diversifying the type and improving the quality of that space. Policies (e.g.: Policy SWF GS1) seek to complete the network of greenspace around the town, integrating this into the new northern growth area and projects SWF GSa – GSd outline opportunities for further enhancements. Ongoing management of green space is recognised as being important, and the Town Council supports the establishment of a Community land Trust to manage and maintain land. Furthermore, the concept masterplan for the northern growth area included in the Neighbourhood Plan, as well as associated placemaking principles established in Policy SWF NGA1 seek to protect important landscape features and to integrate green infrastructure within the development area. Other overarching policies already established in the Local Plan regarding bio and geodiversity also apply to the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 02 | Housing: To meet the housing needs of the Chelmsford City Area and deliver decent homes. | <p>The Chelmsford Local Plan identifies land to the north of Burnham Road as a location for around 1,000 new homes. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for additional growth over this, it does, at Policy SWF NGA1, establish placemaking principles that are intended to help influence the creation of a high quality new neighbourhood that is well integrated with the existing built-up area. At Policy SWF NGA2, the Neighbourhood Plan encourages provision of a wide range of housing types, including self and custom-build homes as well as flexible and adaptable housing types that respond to changing circumstances and demographics.</p> |

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| | | <p>Furthermore, Policy SWF TC3 allows for residential development on upper storeys in the town centre and Policy DC1 promotes high quality design, including building to high environmental standards.</p> <p><i>The Neighbourhood Plan further develops the Chelmsford Local Plan and is considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 03 | <p>Economy, Skills and Employment: To achieve a strong and stable economy which offers rewarding and well located employment opportunities to everyone.</p> | <p>The Chelmsford Local Plan allocation for the Northern Growth Area requires new employment floorspace and a primary school to be delivered. This has already been assessed for SEA purposes through the Local Plan and is carried through into policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan requires these uses to be located such that they contribute towards quality of place and are within good access of the home.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan also recognizes the importance of accommodating a mixture of uses in the town centre and in Policy SWF TC3 notes the employment generating uses are appropriate. Equally, at Policy SWF TC4, it seeks to protect community facilities, which includes schools.</p> <p>The suite of access and movement policies and projects outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan (in section 5) are intended to make the town easier for all to move around, including access to employment opportunities.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 04 | <p>Sustainable Living and Revitalisation: To promote urban renaissance and support the vitality of rural centres, tackle deprivation and promote sustainable living.</p> | <p>Policies SWF TC1 – TC6 and associated Projects SWF TCa and TCb are focused on strengthening the quality, role and function of South Woodham Ferrers town centre, establishing appropriate uses for the centre, promoting new activities, an improved public realm and connections to the centre, as well as other initiatives associated with branding, pilot projects and establishment of a Forum or similar in partnership with local businesses and developers who, together, can promote the centre and its offer. At the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan is the</p> |

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| | | <p>aspiration to promote more active and healthy lifestyles, including the promotion of walking and cycling, safer, more direct and attractive routes to the centre for all (e.g.: Policy SWF MA1 and Project SWF MAa).</p> <p><i>Revitalising the Town Centre is a core objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies and projects are considered to result in a Significant Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 05 | Health and Wellbeing: To improve the health and wellbeing of those living and working in the Chelmsford City Area. | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan, at Policy SWF MA1, promotes development that enables opportunities for 'active travel' (i.e.: walking and cycling). This is supported by Policy SWF MA2 and Projects MAa and MAb which promote improvements to the town wide network of walking and cycling infrastructure, including the safety and attractiveness of the network of pedestrian alleyways, as well as opportunities for repurposing these as places for community gardens and local food production.</p> <p>Policy SWF GS1 and associated Projects SWF GSa – GSc encourage creation of greener streets and spaces, and improved access to open space, the riverside, sports and leisure opportunities.</p> <p>Policy SWF TC4 seeks to protect existing and provide new community facilities in the town centre, including the reuse of vacant buildings for these purposes. Equally, Policy SWF DC4 seeks to safeguard the former Chetwood Primary School for community use. Further, Policy SWF NGA3 promotes delivery of new school and nursery space in the Northern Growth Area in close proximity to the Medical Centre.</p> <p>Design policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, including those set out in SWF DC1 and SWF NGA1 promote walkable neighbourhoods with easy access to community facilities and a mix of open space types, all of which support the concept of healthy and active lifestyles. This is further reflected in Policy SWF NGA2 which promotes provision of flexible and adaptable housing types, allowing for the house to change to enable multi-generational housing where</p> |

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| | | <p>families can live together but also benefit from independence.</p> <p><i>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes active and health lifestyles, protection of and delivery of new community facilities. It is considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 06 | <p>Transport: To reduce the need to travel, promote more sustainable modes of transport and align investment in infrastructure with growth.</p> | <p>Improving access for all is a core objective of the Neighbourhood Plan (Objective 2). Policies SWF MA1 – MA4, along with associated Projects MAa – Mac encourage proposals and interventions that improve the quality of the walking and cycling network for all, as well as public transport connections within the town and neighbouring areas. Support is also given to the design of streets and alleyway connections, such that these become safer places for all people, of all ages, to use. And recognising the technological advances being made in the transport sector, encouragement is given to delivery of new transport solutions that provide choice and opportunity for all, reducing reliance on the private car.</p> <p>Furthermore, Policy SWF TC6 supports reconfiguration of car parking in the town centre, reducing the dominance of the car and encourage a shift to other transport modes. Equally, street greening and play street projects (Projects SWF GSa and GSb respectively) promote safer, green streets. Policy SWF DC3 establishes design policies that ensure parking is appropriately designed for within residential areas, and Policy SWF NGA1 establishes placemaking principles for the northern growth area, which include a permeable street structure, well connected walking and cycling routes, reduced traffic speeds and integration of bus provision within the development area.</p> <p><i>Promoting sustainable and active travel is a core objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies and projects are considered to result in a Significant Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 07 | <p>Land Use and Soils: To encourage the efficient</p> | <p>The revitalisation of the town centre is a key objective of the NDP. Central to this, the NDP seeks to</p> |

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| | use of land and conserve and enhance soils. | <p>encourage the efficient use of land by encouraging development to be delivered along the 'central spine' between the Bandstand Square and Trinity Square within the town centre. Policy SWF DC2 further stipulates that development proposals should be for land within the 'built-up' area, which includes land within the extent of the Northern Growth Area.</p> <p>With the above in mind, soils will be conserved through protecting and completing the 'green necklace', as explained in Policy SWF GS1 (Completing the Green Necklace) and SWF GS2 (Built-Up Area). As highlighted in Project SWF GSd, support has been given to the establishment of a Community Land Trust to manage and maintain open spaces outside the built-up area. It is therefore envisioned that this Trust will help to protect open spaces and conserve soils within these areas.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a neutral effect on the achievement of this objective.</i></p> |
| 08 | Water: To conserve water quality and resources. | <p>Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) makes explicit reference to conserving existing water networks, by stating that development within the Northern Growth area should incorporate existing streams and water features within the site into green spaces and streets, and SuDs should be multi-functional to deliver benefits for the built, natural and historic environment. In addition, Policy SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles) states that development proposals within the town centre should align with SuDS drainage principles, thus ensuring that water quality is maintained within built-up environments.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a neutral effect on the achievement of this objective.</i></p> |
| 09 | Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion: To reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion to people and property, taking into | <p>Policy SWF NGA1 (Placemaking Principles) makes explicit reference to conserving existing fluvial networks, stating that development within the Northern Growth Area should incorporate existing streams and water features within the site into green</p> |

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| | account the effects of climate change. | <p>spaces and streets, and SuDs should be multi-functional to deliver benefits for the built, natural and historic environment. In addition, Policy SWF TC2 (Town Centre Design Principles) states that development proposals within the town centre should align with SuDS drainage principles, as well as exploring options which reduce surface water runoff volumes.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the NDP highlights that community infrastructure levy monies will be secured and allocated to development mitigation measures, in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 10 | Air: To improve air quality. | <p>The NDP is set in the context of the 'Climate and Climate Emergency' declared by Chelmsford City Council in July 2019. In recognition of the above, a range of NDP policies seek to address and mitigate climate change effects, such as policies SWF MA1 (Active Travel), SWF MA2 (Alleyways), SWF MA3 (Public Transport) and SWF MA4 (E-vehicles and Mobility as Service), which seek to encourage active transport modes, better public transport and the provision of new direct alleyways and e-vehicle charging points in all new developments. All of the above seek to reduce our dependency on the private car, thus encouraging the uptake of sustainable modes which cause less harmful air quality effects than private car use.</p> <p>In addition, Policy SWF DC2 (Built-Up Area) states that new development should be located in the 'built-up area' of South Woodham Ferrers. This, in turn, will help to shorten commuting/travel patterns, as people have better access to their day-to-day needs. This will further help to improve air quality through ensuring that services and facilities are within a walking or cycling distance.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect</i></p> |

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| 11 | Climate Change: To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. | <p>Policies with regard to climate change matters are established in the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to repeat those policies. However, climate change is addressed through a range of other policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. The emphasis on walking and cycling, and thus traffic reduction, for example, are central to this objective, as are initiatives to introduce more greenery into the built-up area. Furthermore, design principles in Policy SWF DC1 give strong support and encouragement to low carbon development, solar orientation and promotion of Passivhaus standards.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a Minor Positive Effect</i></p> |
| 12 | Waste and Natural Resources: To promote the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover) and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. | <p>Policies with regard to waste, refuse, recycling and natural resources are established in the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to repeat or add to those policies as they are considered to appropriately cover the challenges for South Woodham Ferrers.</p> <p><i>The policies and projects in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to result in a neutral effect on the achievement of this objective.</i></p> |
| 13 | Cultural Heritage: To conserve and enhance the historic environment, cultural heritage, character and setting. | <p>The spatial interpretation of the vision and objectives contained within the Neighbourhood Plan illustrate how South Woodham Ferrers should grow and respond in such a way that reflects its identity and green setting.</p> <p>Design policies within the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the legacy of the Essex Design Guide and its unique role in shaping South Woodham Ferrers. Policies SWF DC1 and DC2 outline design principles that should inform development proposals in response to the historic growth of the town. Furthermore, Policy SWF NGA2, which promotes a mix of housing, including opportunities for self and custom-build homes, responds to the heritage of South Woodham Ferrers as reflected in the original plotlands development.</p> |

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| | | <p>Policy SWF GS1 seeks to maximise the green and blue setting of the town, and to create accessible green space, introducing this into the urban fabric such that South Woodham Ferrers can become 'the riverside country town' it was originally envisaged to be.</p> <p><i>The Neighbourhood Plan is set in the context of the original masterplan and vision for South Woodham Ferrers. The policies and projects are considered to result in a Significant Positive Effect.</i></p> |
| 14 | Landscape and Townscape: To conserve and enhance landscape character and townscapes. | <p>As outlined above, the setting and design legacy of the town is strongly reflected in Core Objectives 3, 4 and 5, which seek to enhance green infrastructure, design quality and the shape of new development. The Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by production of a Landscape Assessment and Character Study. These identify key qualities that should be reflected in new development.</p> <p>Policy GS1 seeks to complete the 'green necklace' around the town and to make this accessible to all, and associated projects SWF GSa – GSd seek to integrate new greenery into the town as well as enhancing access to and the setting of the riverside as a key feature of South Woodham Ferrers.</p> <p>Policy DC1 requires high quality new development reflecting best practice design principles, responding to the identified character and positive qualities in the town, including the traditional Essex vernacular. Project SWF DCa promotes the use of design review to assess emerging proposals and promote better quality design in new development. Design principles for the town centre are also set out in Policy SWF TC2 and Policy SWF MA2 specifically responds to the network of pedestrian alleyways which are a particular feature of the town. Furthermore, Policy SWF NGA1 establishes principles for the northern growth area, including criteria in relation to local landscape and views, particularly in relation to Bushy Hill which forms an important backdrop to the town.</p> |

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| | | <i>The Neighbourhood Plan is set in the context of the original masterplan and vision for South Woodham Ferrers, its character and setting. The policies and projects are considered to result in a Significant Positive Effect.</i> |
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6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This document demonstrates that the Basic Conditions, as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein.
- 6.2 It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan complies with the Basic Conditions and, subject to any modifications recommended by the Examiner, should proceed to referendum.

Appendix A: Designation



DECISION MADE BY THE DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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| SUBJECT | South Woodham Ferrers proposed Neighbourhood Plan - approval of submitted geographical area in preparation for designating a Neighbourhood Area. |
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REPORT

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| 1.1 | <p>South Woodham Ferrers Town Council has informed CCC of its wish to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. The first step in the process is for designation of a Neighbourhood Area, which will be the boundary for the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>It has submitted an application letter which sets out the request, states that it is a 'relevant body', and has attached a map showing the proposed boundary for the Plan- meeting the requirements of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 in full.</p> |
| 1.2 | <p>Chelmsford City Council must now publicise the application on its website, along with details of how to make comments, and the closing date for those comments, for a minimum of six weeks.</p> <p>This publication must start 'as soon as possible' after receipt of the application.</p> |
| 1.3 | <p>Before publication, the City Council should agree that the area submitted is appropriate.</p> <p>Government guidance says that the area applied for by the 'qualifying (relevant) body' should be approved by the LPA unless there are clear reasons why an alternative Neighbourhood Area is more appropriate. The starting point should be a boundary that makes sense to that community and is logical in spatial terms.</p> |
| 1.4 | <p>The area submitted is the whole of the parish of South Woodham Ferrers (see the submitted plan attached). This is deemed logical in spatial terms, as it follows the parish boundary. There are no clear reasons, such as future development proposals, to indicate that an alternative Neighbourhood Area is more appropriate.</p> |
| 1.5 | <p>This report seeks approval of the submitted area, to enable consultation on its designation as a Neighbourhood Area.</p> |

RECOMMENDATION

That the geographical area, submitted by South Woodham Ferrers Town Council for designation as a Neighbourhood Area, is approved for consultation.

Signed

Jenny Robinson

Planner/urban designer

Date 09/10/15

IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO ME I HEREBY AGREE TO
THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATION

Signed

David Green

Director of Sustainable Communities

Date 09/10/15

Appendix B: SEA / HRA Screening

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT and
HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT
DRAFT SCREENING REPORT**

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Chelmsford City Council
26 March 2020, Version 3 (Including HRA Screening)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This screening report is designed to determine whether the draft South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan (SWFNP) requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 1.2 The purpose of the SWFNP is to provide planning policies to guide development in the designated Neighbourhood Plan area (Appendix 1).
- 1.3 An SEA evaluates the environmental effects of a plan before it is made. The SEA requirements are in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.4 An HRA identifies whether a plan is likely to have any significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. European sites are designated under the UK Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitats Regulations').
- 1.5 In some circumstances, a Neighbourhood Plan can have significant environmental effects. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the Plan is compatible with European Union Obligations.
- 1.6 Chelmsford City Council (CCC) has the responsibility to ensure that the SEA/HRA requirements have been met, and has provided South Woodham Ferrers Town Council, as the qualifying body preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, with an SEA/HRA screening opinion.
- 1.7 To do this, CCC has:
 - a) Taken into account the criteria specified in the European Directives; and
 - b) Consulted the consultation bodies.
- 1.8 The consultation bodies are defined in section 4 of the SEA Regulations. As the responsible authority, CCC has sought the opinions of the statutory consultation bodies – Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England.
- 1.9 The HRA screening of potential impacts of the draft SWFNP has been carried out since the initial SEA Screening was completed. Therefore, the Council will reconsult with the consultation bodies on this version of the screening report.

2 Legislative background

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive [2001/42/EC](#) 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the Environment'. This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations.

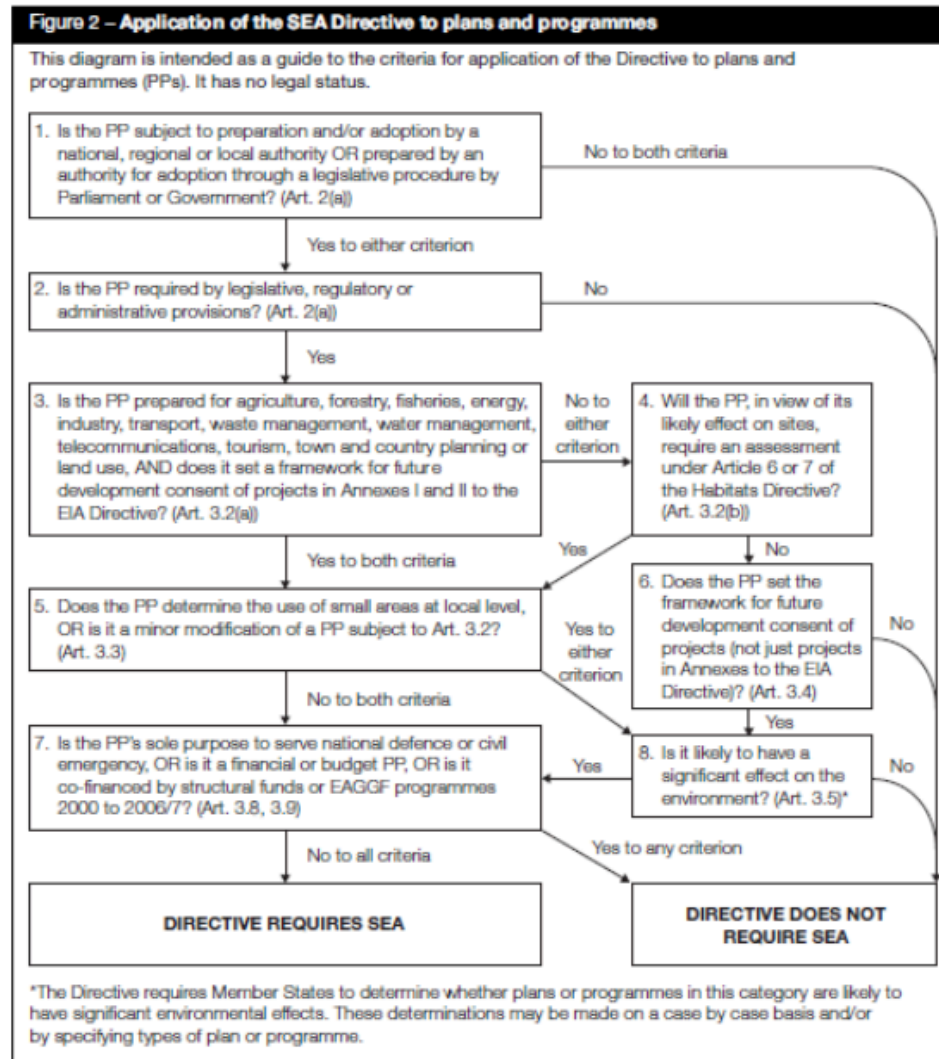
- 2.2 The SEA Regulations include a definition of ‘plans and programmes’ to which the regulations apply, and which programmes are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.
- 2.3 The basis for HRA is Article 6 (3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 2.4 Production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. It is an optional process under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (subsequently amended by the Localism Act 2011). However, once a Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’ it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area to which it applies. As such, it therefore forms part of a plan that is required by legislative provisions i.e. the Chelmsford Local Plan (due for adoption in 2020).

3 SEA - Criteria

- 3.1 The criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below:
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
 - The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.
 - The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.
 - The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.
 - Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.
 - The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.
 - The cumulative nature of the effects.
 - The trans boundary nature of the effects.
 - The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).
 - The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected), the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
 - intensive land-use; and
 - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

4 SEA – Screening Assessment

- 4.1 The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required.



Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)

- 4.2 The following assessment applies the questions from the diagram above. The answers determine whether the SWFNP will require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

| Question | Response |
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| 1) Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a)) | Yes. The preparation and adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Plan is being prepared by South Woodham Ferrers Town Council as the relevant body and, subject to successful completion of the relevant processes as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012, will be made by Chelmsford City Council as the local authority to become part of the statutory Local Plan for that part of the Council's area. |
| 2) Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a)) | Yes. A Neighbourhood Plan is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. It is an optional process under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (amended by the Localism Act 2011). However, once a Neighbourhood Plan is made it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area to which it applies. As such it forms part of a plan that is required by legislative provisions. |
| 3) Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a)) | <p>Yes. The Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for town and country planning and land use. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies to determine the use of land at the local (parish) level (Art3 (3)). It implements strategic policies in the Chelmsford Local Plan as they relate to the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Area, as part of the Local Plan allocation called Strategic Growth Site 7 – South Woodham Ferrers (subject to renumbering in the final adopted version).</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will provide guidance against which planning applications will be assessed throughout the Town Council's area, but it does not allocate any land for development.</p> |
| 4) Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b)) | <p>No. The strategic allocation in the Chelmsford Local Plan has been tested through the Pre-Submission Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (Submission Document SD 006).</p> <p>This assessment states that the strategic allocation is within 500m of the Crouch estuary, and therefore also of the Essex Estuaries SAC, Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA, and Crouch and Roach Estuaries Ramsar.</p> |

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| | <p>Overall, it is considered that the strategic allocation has the potential to significantly affect the SPA/Ramsar through increased visitor pressure, but that this can be moderated or avoided through appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the Local Plan.</p> <p>The mitigation measures include the emerging Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), which will be adopted as a SPD to guide development proposals and set out the requirement for developers to contribute to the delivery of this strategy.</p> <p>The RAMS will include measures that have been successfully employed for other European sites (e.g. Thames Basin Heaths SPA; Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar), supported by developer contributions. As a result, this plan-level mitigation measure is considered to be available, achievable and likely to be effective and so can be relied on to ensure that proposals coming forward under the Local Plan either avoid affecting the designated sites (no significant effect) or, where significant effects cannot be avoided, that effects will not adversely affect site integrity. It is anticipated this will be adopted in 2020, before work commences on development of the strategic site.</p> |
| 5) Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3) | Yes. The Neighbourhood Plan will include policies for the use of land and buildings within the Neighbourhood Plan area. |
| 6) Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3(4)) | Yes. The Neighbourhood Plan will be used for the determination of planning applications including new housing sites. |
| 7) Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes | No, not applicable. |

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| 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9) | |
| 8) Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3(5)) | No. See entry 4) of this table. |

5 SEA - Consultation

- 5.1 CCC consulted the consultation bodies (see 1.7) in October/November 2019. The consultation responses are attached to this report (Appendix 2), and all support CCC's opinion that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be necessary to accompany the SWFNP.
- 5.2 In summary:
- Environment Agency - do not disagree with the conclusion reached that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment report is not required;
 - Historic England - concurs with the report that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required;
 - Natural England – there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan; the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

6 SEA - Conclusion

- 6.1 As a result of the assessment in Section 4, and the responses from the consultation bodies, Chelmsford City Council has concluded that there are not likely to be significant environmental effects arising directly from the decisions taken through the SWFNP.
- 6.2 Therefore, a full Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be necessary to accompany the SWFNP.

7 HRA – Screening Assessment

- 7.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 set out the requirement for neighbourhood plans to assess implications for European Sites (Regulation 106). As noted at Paragraph 1.9 of this report, the HRA screening of potential impacts of the SWFNP has been carried out since the initial SEA Screening was completed.
- 7.2 Chelmsford Local Plan allocates land at South Woodham Ferrers for a strategic development of around 1,000 homes, along with supporting development, access, and supporting infrastructure.

- 7.3 The Local Plan has been subject to continuous and iterative HRA screening and has been found sound following an independent examination. The relevant Submission documents are SD006, SD007, SD008, which can be found at:
<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/local-plan-examination/local-plan-examination-documents/>
- 7.4 The HRA assessed three principal aspects for appropriate assessment, namely recreational pressure, air quality and water quality. The HRA concluded that significant effects from development proposed in the Local Plan cannot be excluded, with alone or in combination with other plans. This has led to the development of the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). This identifies a detailed programme of strategic mitigation measures across 12 local authority areas, which are to be funded by developer contributions from residential development schemes, and which is endorsed by Natural England.
- 7.5 South Woodham Ferrers lies entirely within the zone of influence of the following European designated sites:
- Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA;
 - Crouch and Roach Estuaries Ramsar; and
 - Essex Estuaries SAC.
- 7.6 The Local Plan Strategic Growth Site Policy for the South Woodham Ferrers allocation includes the following requirements:
- *Where appropriate, contributions from developments will be secured towards mitigation measures identified in the Essex Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which will be completed by the time the Local Plan is adopted. Prior to RAMS completion, the authority will seek contributions, where appropriate, from proposed residential development to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitats Regulations and Habitats Directive;*
 - *Undertake a project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment to address the impacts other than recreational disturbance.*
- 7.7 The draft SWFNP does not propose development allocations in addition to the Strategic Growth Site allocation in the Local Plan. There are no other Neighbourhood Area Designations near to South Woodham Ferrers, so no cumulative effects from other Neighbourhood Plans are anticipated.
- 7.8 Proposed policies in the draft SWFNP concern the Town Centre uses and design, movement and access including sustainable travel, green space and natural environment, design and character, and the northern growth area (Strategic Growth Site allocation). It is considered that these policies would not create additional risks of a significant effect on the identified European sites

8 HRA – Conclusion

- 8.1 Given that the Strategic Growth Site allocation has been subject to continuous and iterative HRA screening, and the conclusion that the proposed policies in the draft SWFNP would not create any significant effects on the identified European Sites, it is therefore concluded that further stages of appropriate assessment for the SWFNP are not required.

9 Next steps

- 9.1 Any further comments submitted by the consultation bodies will be used to finalise this report, which will then be published on CCC's website:
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/communityplans

South Woodham Ferrers
Neighbourhood Plan, 2020-2036

Basic Conditions Statement (incorporating Area Statement): June 2020



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